

## CHAPTER IV

### CONSTANTINE AND HIS COLLEAGUES

WHILE Constantine thus peacefully succeeded his father in the command of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, Italy was the scene of continued disturbance and of a successful usurpation. We have seen how Severus, an officer of the eastern army and a trusted friend of Galerius, had been chosen to take over the command which Maximian so unwillingly laid down at Milan. He was proclaimed Caesar, with Italy and Africa for his portion, and the administration passed into his hands. But he preferred, apparently, to remain on the Illyrian border rather than shew himself in Rome, and, in his absence, Maxentius, a son of Maximian, took the opportunity of claiming the heritage of which he considered himself to have been robbed..

No single historian has had a good word to say for Maxentius, who is described by Lactantius as "a man of depraved mind, so consumed with pride and stubbornness that he paid no deference or respect either to his father or his father-in-law and was in consequence hated by both."<sup>1</sup> \* He had married

\* *De Mort. Per sec.*, c. 18.